

What Baptism & Communion Is & Isn't - August 31st, 2014

- As I mentioned last week, we'll have a topical teaching on water baptism and communion, given that today we'll be doing both as a church.
- Lord willing we'll resume our 1st Corinthians study next week as we continue our series titled, Why Pride Causes Me Problems in chapter 4.
- Be that as it may, we'll start first with water baptism then, we'll bring our time together in God's Word to a close by partaking of communion.

- If you were to put a title on today's topical teaching, it would probably have to be something like, "What Baptism & Communion Is & Isn't."
- My hope in doing this teaching today is that it will answer the unanswered questions as it relates to water baptism as well as communion.
- I'll begin with what water baptism is, and in so doing we should be able to see more clearly how baptism and communion are tied together.

1. Water baptism is a Biblical command that we obey once we become a believer in and follower of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Luke 9:23 NIV Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

2. Water baptism is an outward expression of an inward commitment to Christ, and proclaiming publically, His death, burial, and resurrection.

Romans 6:1-8 NIV What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? (2) By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? (3) Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus (Baptizo) were baptized (Baptizo) into his death? (4) We were therefore buried with him through baptism (Baptismos) into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (5) If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. (6) For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— (7) because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. (8) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

- What's interesting about this passage in Romans is, the Apostle Paul uses two different Greek words translated as baptized and baptism.
- The significance of these words is that, one carries with it the idea of being dipped, and the other carries with it the idea of being soaked.
- By way of illustration, I'll refer to an ancient Greek recipe for making pickles, this because it delineates between both baptizo & baptismos.

- More specifically, baptizo meant to dip, and was used among the Greeks to signify the dyeing of a garment that was dipped into the dye.
- Baptismos on the other hand meant to soak, and was used among the Greeks to describe the ceremonial washings of articles by soaking.
- This is where our ancient Greek pickle recipe comes in, if the cucumber is dipped, (baptizo), into water there's no change to the cucumber.

- However, if the cucumber is soaked, (baptismos), into vinegar there is a change, such that, the cucumber will become a pickle with flavor.
- It's for this reason that Paul uses these two words, in that, we're dipped, (baptizo), into the water, though there's no change to us physically.
- Conversely, we're buried with Christ through baptism, (baptismos), into His death, and resurrection from death, we're changed spiritually.

- Let me explain, our old self is spiritually buried with Christ, and as such we become dead to sin in the sense that we're dead to sin's power.
- By that I mean we're dead to sin's power because we've been separated from sin's power. That's not to say that we will never sin again.
- Rather, it means that we have been set free from the bondage and slavery to sin by virtue of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

3. Water baptism is not a requirement for one's salvation. In other words, you do not have to be water baptized, in order for you to be saved.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— (9) not by works, so that no one can boast.

John 3:3 NIV In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

Romans 10:9-10 NIV That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Luke 23:43 NIV Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

4. Water baptism is not able to cleanse or remove any sinful habits that I may have in my life. The only way is to confess and forsake my sin.

1 John 1:9 NKJV If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Proverbs 28:13 NKJV He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy.

- As we now turn a corner and look at what communion is and is not, what we find is that it parallels the water baptism for the same reasons.
- Communion is a command we obey as believers in and followers of Jesus Christ, and it's an outward expression of an inward commitment.
- Also, the communion is not a requirement for one's salvation nor is it able to cleanse or remove any sinful habits that I may have in my life.

- However, there is a common denominator in the communion and baptism, such that we identify with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.
- Here's how, baptism is a symbol of His death, burial and resurrection, and communion is a celebration of His death, burial and resurrection.
- I suppose you could say that this is "why" we do "what" we're about to do starting now with communion, then this afternoon, water baptism.

Luke 22:14-20 NIV When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. (15) And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. (16) For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." (17) After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. (18) For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." (19) And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." (20) In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.